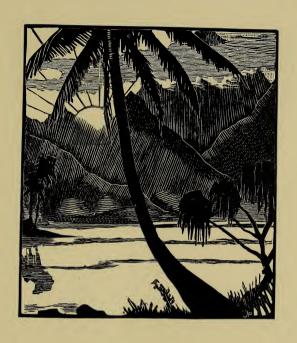


AUTVION'S FINAT BOOK FINAT FINITION

75 =



To one hour of one night between the setting of a tired moon and the rising of a joyous sun I dedicate my book.

3



Hawaiian Islands
Leaves from My Grass House
Glamour's Gone
Night-Blooming Cereus
Luau
Gold
Somewhere on Punchbowl Hill
Sunset from Mt. Tantalus
Hula Dancers
Chinese Store
Chinese Shawls
Chinese Music
Jewel Trees
Foreboding
To Leilehua Beamer



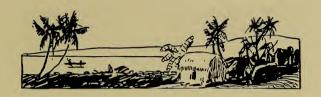
My Hawaiian Garden Ala Moana Mexican Creeper Clearing of the Kona Storm Poinciana Regia Tree Footsteps The Moon-Rainbow Silvered Sea Koa Trees in a Mist Purple Bougainvillea Vine Poi To the Artists of Hawaii Some Lines Scratched on the Door of Vagabond's House Vagabond's House Aloha Oe

Cover design by Jean Bernard Shiffer Decorations by A. S. Macleod Woodcut by John Poole



HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

These islands—born of the night, sired by the sun, cradled in the sea, with the moon for god-mother.



LEAVES FROM MY GRASS HOUSE

 $\mathbf{M}^{ ext{Y}}$ GRASS house stands by the open

On a bit of beach that belongs to me, And I paid—I don't remember the price Of my little acre in Paradise.

Now, a great deal more than sun-browned leaves

Of Island grass went into the weaves And walls of my house, for all day long As we built the hut there were scraps of song

And tatters of laughter and wisps of sighs
All tangled up with the binding ties
Of love and friendliness. Wondrous things
Were used to make my house. The strings
Of my heart were the warp, my love the
woof

Of woven walls and brown thatched roof.



Oh, the Southern Cross hangs over my door And the moon flings silver on the floor, While the surf makes thunder along the beach

And the rainbow's end is within my reach.

The jasmine sprinkles my walls with stars And spendthrift sun-gold lies in bars On the hala mat where I sprawl at ease And feel the swift caressing breeze That is tanged with salt from the lazy sea Where the flying fish skim endlessly.

By looking beyond my window ledge I can see a long hibiscus hedge With polka-dot pattern of red and white Aquiver with life in the drenching light.

The green fantastic mountains rise In sudden swoops to the startled skies, Where white cloud-monsters puff their cheeks

And scrape their bellies across the peaks.



Along the reef on a still dark night A fisherman prowls with a flaring light Of smoky orange. He peers and feels In the coral caves for the tiger-eels And the slimy squid. He brings to me Crisp, wet li'mu, cooled by the sea, And little sea-urchins, full of meat, And lobsters and crabs for me to eat.

There's a monkey-pod tree upon my lawn Where the mynah birds, at the peep of dawn,

Raise an awful row, but I don't care. I rather like to hear them there.

Oh, the seasons come and the seasons go And the kona-storms and the trade-winds blow.

And the mangoes ripen on the trees And I smell white ginger in the breeze. The breadfruit swings its swollen globes Of luscious green. Like royal robes The gorgeous bougainvillea spreads Its scarlet and magenta reds.



All up and down the road, in rows, The autumn-colored croton grows In red and green and russet-brown. A little stream comes rushing down Across my yard. I dammed it, so The water hyacinth could grow.

In June the reckless shower-trees
Spend all their hoarded wealth to please
My fancy with a dress of gold.
While poinciana, wanton-bold,
Bedecks itself with flaming red.
The pale begonia-flowers shed
A pearly, pinkish sort of dew
Of petals on the grass. Can you
Look through my eyes and see this land
Where beauty lives on every hand?
And, would you care to use my ears
And hear the music with its tears
Beneath a joyous note? I'll give
My heart to you so you may live

One day in Paradise. My hut Of grass is open to you, but I think before the day has flown You'll want a grass house of your own.

Oh, little grass house on the beach, Your drifting wind-blown leaves will reach Across the world, across the years And settle on my heart. The fears Of losing you have made me care To pluck a leaf from here and there And weave them into lazy line And keep them in this book of mine.





GLAMOUR'S GONE.

To a Tourist Who Could Find No Lure or Charm in Hawaii.

W HAT thin and tepid blood must flow in veins of you who say the glamour's

gone

From all these fair, far islands of the seas beneath the southern cross.

If there is not a scarlet witchery in the

perfume of ylang-ylang . . .

if all the lingering sweetness of white ginger bloom has lost its subtle thrill . . . if scented moonlight, vibrant with the throbbing song of hot native voices, can not raise the rythm of your heart one beat . . .

if thrushes, singing poignant beauty in lost blue valleys of Manoa, can not

make you dream of Pan. . . .

if all the secret whisperings of palms, and sighing swooning croon of restless surf on beaches made for all the lovers in the world, are naught to you... if with white coral and fine gold sand you can not build the castle of your dreams

if your cold flesh can still be calm beneath the silk caresses of scent-burdened breezes

if your light fancy can not climb the sky-flung curve of that pale moonstone arch, the lunar rainbow, to steal one jewelled star for your sweet love . . . if one long sobbing note of steel guitar, slid from a moaning minor to a tremulous treble sigh, can not search out your slow-beating heart and trip its sluggish pulsing for one quick moment if all these things have lost their power for they are not gone . . . then romance is dead, beauty is a hag, love is an idle tale, blood can know no sultry fevers of desire

and glamour's gone from Hawaii and from all the world for you!





NIGHT-BLOOMING CEREUS

Written for Lillian Wilder

[Note: As the scarred and calloused fingers of a Chinese jade-carver hold delicately the exquisite product of his art, so do the ugly cacti offer tentatively and in the night the rare unearthly beauty of their bloom.]

SIX months the long green cactus branches sprawl

Like spiny serpents carved from opaque jade,

Gorging themselves with sunlight on the wall

Or seeking dewy coolness in the shade.

Half of a year's white moons yield pallid light:

Dews of a hundred mornings keep them fresh;

Mists cool their sun-parched skin throughout the night;

Earth, with volcanic ashes, feeds their flesh.



Then on some mystic night—who gives the hour?

Down the long line a silent call is thrilled;

Ten thousand buds to moonlit glory flower, Ten thousand star-white blooms with light are filled;

Down from the mountain peaks in phantom line,

Great, bronzy Polynesian gods pass by To drink from flower-chalices a wine Of white and scented moonlight of Hawaii.

Dawn, with its rosy, eager, thirsting lips Hurries the sun but finds the wine-cups drained;

Finds but the dregs and, disappointed, sips And waits 'til six new moons have waxed and waned.



Luau

OH, we're going to a luau, to a luau, to a luau

Where we'll dance the hula-hula on a beach beneath the stars

And there'll be a lot of singing for the singing boys are bringing

All their tricky ukuleles and their sobbing steel guitars.



GOLD

My treasure chest is filled with gold.

Gold . . . gold . . gold . . .

Vagabond's gold and drifter's gold . . .

Worthless, priceless, dreamer's gold . . .

Gold of the sunset . . . gold of the dawn . . .

Gold of the shower trees on my lawn . . .

Poet's gold and artist's gold . . .

Gold that can not be bought or sold—

Gold.



Somewhere on Punchbowl Hill

A little reckless narrow street Goes plunging down the hill to meet The broad and stately avenue (A thing no proper street should do.) But does this little street repine And moan about its swift decline? Oh. no. indeed. Instead it flaunts A gaudy flowered dress and taunts The avenue below with hints Of bougainvillea's purple tints And poinciana's regal flame. Why, with a brazen lack of shame It wears a jade-green bracelet Of "chain-of-love," the bold coquette! The houses all along the way Don't quite approve of such display For they are filled (and here's the joke) With very nice and proper folk.



SUNSET FROM MT. TANTALUS

Interpretation of a Painting by Frank Moore

THE sea is a cloth of gold. The sky

Blazes, a flaming curtain in the West; The sun, like a weary lover, sinks to rest Drugged with a day of hot and golden love;

Sated with endless hours of fragrant bliss, Listlessly he takes departing sips Of honey from the flowers' painted lips Lifted so eagerly to meet his kiss.

Then, in the fleeting pause before the night, Slowly he turns the glory of his face And flings to earth, with gorgeous godlike grace

His gift—a chain of burning amber light.



Hula Dancers

I WATCHED a hula dance last night Upon a beach of sand so white Its crescent reproduced the moon. The surf with driving crash and swoon Set up a rythm in my blood. Kukui torches cast a flood Of murky orange light that played About the dancers as they swayed.

A-thud-a-thud... a beaten gourd! Hot voices—native voices—poured Wild cadences of old refrains Like ti-root liquor in my veins.

I watched the dance A thousand years Turned back, and dully in my ears I heard the low, hypnotic beat Of hollow drum and smelled the sweet

Sick reek of living sacrifice And flowers crushed and burning spice; I knew the savage prayer and chant Of priests. I heard the victim pant In agony. One glimpse I had Of postures passionate and mad.

The movements of the dance last night Were gestures from some phallic rite Performed a thousand years ago Before some stone-faced god, I know.

PALM TREES

Long lines of patient yearning palms keep faithful rendezvous with faithless loverwinds beside the sea.



店 華 精 繍 錦 華

CHINESE STORE

MUSTY, fusty, dusty smells, Gilded gods and temple bells Candlesticks of twisted brass, Teak and ebony and glass.

Silks.

Slinky, slithery silks

That hiss and shimmer as Ah Moy stirs them:

Light from a painted lantern blurs them.

Soft, whispering silks . .

Heavy, murmurous silks . . .

Celestial blues . .

Rainbow hues . . .

Many silks.

And little boxes.

Red lacquered pigskin.

Brass boxes from Thibet, studded with turquoise.

Raw turquoise and white jade.

Boxes that a blind man made.

Feeling with scarred sensitive fingers

For the design

And twisting line

Of the dragon's tail.

Fragile ivory boxes, delicate as lace, holding king-fisher feather jewelry and neck-laces and ear-rings and tiny flowers made of silver shavings and gold wire and seed pearls.

Red, red lacquer
And black lacquer flecked with gold
And traced with the name of the Emperor.
Glass beads . . .
Carved seeds . . .
Chains of Peking Liu,
Twilight blue
Amber beads that are like globes of honeyed

Amber beads that are like globes of honeyed sunlight, warm to the touch, strung on orange cord.

White light flicked from points of silver filigree.

Many eyes . . .
Eyes of little porcelain dogs
Brightly inquisitive.
Eyes of dragons in silk on a Mandarin coat.
Flaming eyes . . .
Slanted unwinking eyes of Chow Fat
Like black beads with lights behind them.

Chow Fat, the proprietor, His face is like old leather And his smile is kindly And wise. His fingers are very long . . . and pointed.

Behind Chow Fat are the eyes of Buddha The calm gilded eyes of Buddha. Their tranquility soothes unrest.

The Chinese store . . . Musty, fusty, dusty smells. Gilded gods and temple bells And the dull monotonous song Of a brass gong.

售 爭 處 到

CHINESE SHAWLS

THREE Chinese shawls of silk are spread Across a chest of lacquer red.

One shawl is black, with poison green And jade and blue ultramarine— Fantastic flowers, shrill cerise In exquisite embroideries.

Another shawl is oyster white, Exotic blossoms there invite Strange butterflies to 'light and fold Their wings of powdered Chinese gold.

The third is strange in patterned line—Night-black and paper-white design, Quite Beardsley-esque, the very same Sin-flowers spread their leaves of flame.

These Chinese shawls of silk are spread Across a chest of lacquer red.

聽 動 樂 音

CHINESE MUSIC

Eee-e-yih—Bong! and a clat-a-clat-a-clat and a Bong!
I can hear them scraping on a cat-gut nerve. . .

I can hear them beating on a gong. . . . Like the brazen curse Of a bilious god. . . BONG!

clat-a-clat-a-clat and a clat-a-clat-a-clat

Like a goat-hoofed devil on the roof of

my mind

I can hear them beating with a stick . . . Like a dry hard pulse In a wooden vein clat-a-clat-a-clat

eee-yih—a-ah and an eee-yih—a-ah and a BONG!

Like a screech of a tooth with an ache and a voice

In a shrill falsetto like a pain. . . Like the scratch of a pin On a blistered wrist. . . . eee-ee-yih-a-ah

目 滿 瑯 琳

JEWEL TREES

NOW I know where the jewel-trees grow,

Where blossoms of rose-carnelian blow On twisted branches of weathered gold And pale pink petals of quartz unfold To show white stamens tipped with pearls, While lapis-lazuli leaves in swirls With slivers of paper-thin jade surround Fat amber buds. The glittering ground Is flaked with coral-petal flower snow. In cloisonne bowls the jewel-trees grow. In a window of Fong Inn's Store they bear Their burden of beauty. Go see them there.



FOREBODING

For Musical Accompaniment

. . zoom zoom zoom . . .

That is the sound of the surf As the great green waves rush up the shore

As the great green waves rush up the shore With a murderous thundering ominous roar And leave drowned dead things by my door

. . zoom zoom zoom . . .

. . suish . . . suis-s-s-h . . . suis-s-h . . .

That is the sound of the tow

As it slips and slithers along the sands Like terrible groping formless hands

That drag at my beach house where it stands
... suish ... suis-s-s-h ... suis-s-h ...

eeeie-u-u-u . . . eeiu-u-u . . ee-i-e-uuu . . .

That is the sound of the wind. It wails like a banshee adrift in space And threatens to scatter my driftwood place. It slashes the sand like spite in my face

slashes the sand like spite in my face

Surf . . . tow . . . or the wind . . .

Which of the three will it be?

The surf—will it bludgeon and beat me dead

Or the tow drag me down to its ocean bed Or the wind wail a dirge above my head? zoom . . . suis-s-h . . . eei-u-uuu



To Leilehua Beamer

Who Caught the Poetry of Hawaii in Her Hula-Dance

SWIFT-CHANGING curves. The gestures of her hands

Taught waves to draw white lines upon the sands.

Slim fingers, tipped like gull's wings bent in flight;

Dark tropic eyes, deep sky-black pools of night.

Slow fluid curves. A body young and gay—A flower watched her dance and learned to sway.

From throat to wrist—sweet, slipping, wilting lines

That stole their grace from wind-waved maile vines:

Her dance—a mystic, half-forgotten rite Before some Polynesian god at night.

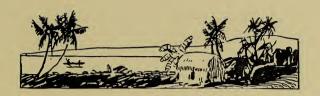


My Hawaiian Garden

I PLANT my flowers, row on row,
In hope that they will grow just so,
All neat and sweet, but I forget
That while the pinks and mignonette
Are used to garden ways, and know
The proper way that they should grow
These tropic blossoms will not do
The sort of thing I want them to.

The yellow alamanda sprawls
In gold confusion on the walls
And in among its flower-suns
The little starry jasmine runs.
The bougainvillea climbs the trees
And flings its tatters on the breeze,
All scarlet, green and purple-red—
A canopy above my head.

The multi-colored little phlox Grow here and there among the rocks Like gay confetti tossed about In some moonlit midsummer's rout. The fragile spider-lily weaves A cobweb lace of white. The leaves



Of croton hedges growing here Hold autumn colors through the year. In spring the mangoes' varnished green Is changed to bronze. I've often seen A honey-moth with searching tongue And whirring wings fly in among The heavy nodding ragged heads Of dahlias. I have several beds Of asters, purple, pink and white. My ginger plants are my delight. No flower grows so sweet and clean As wild white ginger blooms. They mean Hawaii to me. I make a lei Of them for friends who go away. The gay and festive "chain-of-love" Hangs leafy chains of hearts above My garden gate. Day lilies show Their throats of orange-gold. I know Where pirates' loot-great "cups-of-gold"-Grows in my garden. They unfold Their heavy petals, drenched with dew And perfume. Morning-glories blue Swing pale day-moons in graceful lines About the place. Moon-flower vines Make mimic moons, with scented discs Of petal-silk. A lizard frisks



All in and out among the blooms.
A gray and graceful palm-tree looms
Above the flower beds. Its fronds
Are mirrored in my lily ponds
Where water-hyacinths have grown.
A spiny cactus stands alone
In grim unfriendly prickliness.
I did not like it, I confess,
Until a little timid vine
Of jasmine started to entwine
The gaunt unlovely plant. They look
Like figures in my fairy-book—
(The ugly "Beast" is quite content
With "Beauty's" gentle prisonment.)

Hibiscus hedges line my walk
With flowers. Some are white as chalk,
Or red as blood, or pink as dawn—
Or yellow, flame, cerise or fawn.
A thousand shapes, a thousand shades.
The bees make sudden buzzing raids
Upon the orange sweetheart vine.
Against the wall I have a line
Of tall poinsettia plants. They blow
At Christmas time—a swaying row
Of gay fantastic jagged flowers.
On sunny days I sit for hours



And watch the golden shower trees Yield all their treasure to the bees. The yellow petals strew the ground And wax begonias grow around A little rockery where ferns And air plants hang from Chinese urns.

There are no days throughout the year Without some sort of flowers here, In sweet profusion, uncontrolled. If all their many names were told You'd weary of the endless list. No color, tint or shape is missed In Nature's wondrous gift to me.

I wonder if I've made you see
This sunlit, moon-witched rainbow place
Of flowers. Just a little space
Quite filled with flowers, vines and trees,
Walled in with stone, the haunt of bees
And butterflies and lunar moths.
When you are passing will you pause
Or—if you will—drop in and see
This garden that belongs to me?



ALA MOANA

THE sea is a cloth of silver
Stirred to uneasy ripples
By the ghost-white hand of the moon.
Dim in the jewelled distance
Diamond Head crouches,
A headless sphinx
Baring her tawny breasts
To the massed clouds and the sky...
Mists pass
Leaving us alone with the moon
And one brief moment of ecstasy.

RISING MOON

The moon is a great gold coin tossed to those ragged vagabonds, the clouds.



MEXICAN CREEPER

To a Little Vine That Clambers Over the Doorway of Fanny Heaslip Lea's House in Manoa Valley

A LITTLE vine from foreign parts
Has hung your house with jade-green
hearts
And tiny bells, so shrilly pink
They tinkle soundlessly. I think
Its poet's name is "Chain-of-Love"—
Much nicer than the one above,
By which prosaic people know
This little vine from Mexico.

SUNSET OVER WAIANAE MOUNTAINS

The white clouds lift their pale faces and blush rosily to see the sun disrobe.



CLEARING OF THE KONA STORM

Word-Picture of a Painting in Oils by Frank Moore

STORM-CLOUDS, like muffled purple thunder, pass
Blown by the kona. Mountainous, they

Against the sky in sultry wrath, Leaving across the frightened sea a path Of silence. While, with baffled fury spent In angry billowings, they rear their heads and vent

Their rage in futile mutterings above the land;

Then silently and sullenly disband.



Poinciana Regia Tree

 ${
m R}^{
m EGAL}$ tree, you flaunt your dress of scarlet

Brazenly. You royal vermilion harlot, Shamelessly you toss your painted petals On the breeze. Like thin corroded metals Are your leaves. Were you less redly splendid Your career of wantoness were ended.

Other trees for chaster colors labor. They all think you're not a proper neighbor.

FOOTSTEPS

A WINDING Honolulu street
Goes by my house. I hear the feet
Of seven nations passing by.
I hear their footsteps fall, and try
To see the people. I am blind
And have to see them in my mind.

I hear the soft and silken swish
Of Chinese slippers, and I wish
That I could see the colors gay
The women wear. For people say
That coats of silk and bright sateen
With golden thread are worn. I've seen
Them passing in my mind but, oh—
I want to really see them so.

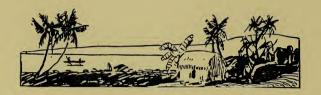
Last night the clack of wooden shoe Or sandal sounded and I knew A Japanese was trotting past. I heard the sound die out at last And thought, because I'd heard before, That on the *obi* that she wore Were figures in exquisite hues—Pale pinks and lavendars and blues.

I pray each day I pray each night To God. I want . . . I want my sight!

Sometimes the hard decisive sound Of leather heels strikes on the ground, So firm—so firm. I know the stride Is that of youth. A virile pride Vibrates in every step. His eyes Are clean and blue just as the skies Are blue. I know their eager gaze Is clear—not blind with murky haze.

Sometimes there comes a sound so low I scarcely hear it—yet I know That native lovers, barefoot, walk. The whispered murmur of their talk Drifts in. I listen and surmise The silver moon is in their eyes. How odd—if poets do not lie—These lovers, too, are blind as I.

All day, all day and thru the night I hear the people pass. I fight To keep my soul quite free from hate. I cannot yet—I cry the fate That took my sight. Oh, if I pray To God, and live my prayers, some day Will He—if I believe—will He Give back my eyes—my sight—to me?



THE MOON-RAINBOW

[The lunar rainbow is a beautiful night effect peculiar to Hawaii. It occurs exactly as the day rainbow does, against a curtain of rain or mist, but its intensity of color compares with the day arch as the moonstone with a fire-opal.]

STAID people say that Pan is dead
But they are wrong. His shaggy head
I saw but yesterday at noon,
And once before when shone the moon
Across Manoa valley where
The ginger blooms. The evening air
Was still—so still it made me fear
That if I shivered he might hear.
I waited while a silver mist
Skimmed down the sky. A moon-beam
kissed

The gauzy veil. Pan looked around And piped. A magic arch of sound Curved out upon the misty air— A lunar rainbow shimmered there!



SILVERED SEA

A Peculiar Light Effect on the Sea Off Waikiki. Painted in Oil by Frank Moore

 B^{LUE} lay the sea, and green and moonstone gray;

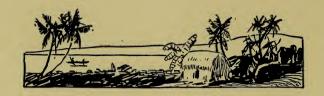
White were the clouds, like veils to hide the sun;

Blue was the sky; and hushed and still the day;

Mauve were the distant hills, and gray and dun;

Then like a mirror's flash, a radiance fell, Blinding and white across the polished sea—

Witch-silver cast by Circe, like a spell
To catch and hold our souls in ecstacy.



KOA TREES IN A MIST

Appreciation of a painting by Frank Moore

MOON-MISTS, like veils of sheer and tinted gauze

Sweep down the slopes of Tantalus at night,

Shimmer and catch the opalescent light, Drifting like souls of ghosts, without a pause;

Floating like filmy garments of a breeze,

Frightened and moon-mad. Endlessly they pale

And dim and pass. Their phantom draperies trail

Tatters of silver in the koa trees.



PURPLE BOUGAINVILLEA VINE

MY house in Honolulu town
Is big and cool. The roof is brown.
It once was red, but now the sun
Has faded it. The vines have run
In purple splendor everywhere.
They look so fine, I do not care
To tear their gorgeous blossoms down
And paint the roof. I like it brown.



Poi

One finger, two finger, three finger poi! Go to a luau and eat it with joy.

Eat it with laulau and eat it with limu; Eat it with hunks of roast pig from the imu:

Eat it with breadfruit and big sweet potatoes;

Eat it with salmon fixed up with tomatoes:

Eat it with chicken—it's better with mullet

Which tickles your palate and pleases vour gullet;
Don't use a fork . . .

Wiggle your finger
Deep in the poi-bowl . . .

Lift it, don't linger.

Give it a flip in the proper direction,
It gets in your eye if you don't make
connection.



To the Artists of Hawaii

Magic—it is—to catch the moonlight with your brush

Magic—to paint the passing of a breeze
That stirs the curving leaves of koa trees

Magic—no less—to paint the avalanche rush

Of forest-green down Tantalus. You are a god

To dream a world and make that world take form

In painted trees and sunlight, golden warm,

Or witching moonlight, silvering the raindrenched sod.

Some Lines Scratched on the Door of Vagabond's House

WEST of the sunset stands my house There—and east of the dawn;
North to the Arctic runs my yard;
South to the Pole, my lawn;
Seven seas are to sail my ships
To the ends of the earth—beyond;
Drifter's gold is for me to spend
For I am a vagabond.

Fabulous cities are mine to loot;
Queens of the earth to wed;
Fruits of the world are mine to eat;
The couch of a king, my bed;
All that I see is mine to keep;
Foolish, the fancy seems—
But I am rich with the wealth of Sight,
The coin of the realm of dreams,

VAGABOND'S HOUSE

WHEN I have a house—as I sometime may—

I'll suit my fancy in every way.

I'll fill it with things that have caught my

In drifting from Iceland to Molokai.

It won't be correct or in period style

But—oh, I have thought for a long, long
while

Of all the corners and all the nooks, Of all the bookshelves and all the books, Of the great big table, the deep soft chairs And the Chinese rug at the foot of the stairs. (It's an old, old rug from far Chow Wan That a Chinese princess once walked on.) And there where the shadows fall I've

To have a magnificent Concert-Grand With ivory keys and polished wood—I'd play the thing if I only could.

planned

There'll be, on the table, a rich brocade
That I think the fairies must have made
For the dull gold thread on blues and grays
Weaves the pattern of Puck—the Magic
Maze.

On the mantle-piece I'll have a place For a little mud god with a painted face That was given to me so long ago By a Philippine maid in Olongapo.

I'll have on a stand a box inlaid With dragon-plaques of milk-white jade To hold my own particular brand Of cigarettes brought from the Pharaoh's land.

With a cloisonne bowl on a lizard's skin To flick my cigarette ashes in.
A long low shelf of teak will hold My best-loved books in leather and gold, While magazines lie on a bowlegged stand In a polyglot mixture close at hand.

Pictures—I think I'll have but three;
One, in oil, of a wind-swept sea
With the flying scud and the waves whipped
white.

(I know the chap who can paint it right.)

In lapis blue and a deep jade green— A great big smashing fine marine That'll make you feel the spray in your face. I'll hang it over my fireplace.

The second picture—a freakish thing— Is gaudy and bright as a macaw's wing. An impressionistic smear called "Sin," A nude on a striped zebra skin By a Danish girl I knew in France. My respectable friends will look askance At the purple eyes and the scarlet hair, At the pallid face and the evil stare Of the sinister, beautiful vampire face. I shouldn't have it about the place But I like-while I loathe-the beastly thing And that's the way one feels about Sin.

The picture I love the best of all
Will hang alone on my study wall
Where the sunset's glow and the moon's cold
gleam

Will fall on the face and make it seem

That the eyes in the picture are meeting
mine.

That the lips are curved in a fine sweet line Of the wistful, tender, provocative smile That has stirred my heart for a wondrous while.

It's a sketch of the girl who loved too well To tie me down to that bit of Hell That a drifter knows when he finds he's held

By the soft strong chains that passions weld. It was best for her and for me, I know, That she measured our love and bade me go For we both have our great illusion yet Unsoiled, unspoiled by a vain regret.

All these things I will have about,
Not a one could I do without;
Cedar and sandalwood chips to burn
In the tarnished bowl of a copper urn,
A paperweight of meteorite
That seared and scorched the sky one night,
A Malay kris—my paper-knife—
That slit the throat of a rajah's wife.

The beams of my house will be fragrant wood

That once in some teeming jungle stood As a proud tall tree where the leopards couched,

And the parrots screamed and the black men crouched.

When I have my house I will suit myself And have what I'll call my "Condiment shelf"

Filled with all manner of herbs and spice, Curry and chutney for meats and rice, Pots and bottles of extracts rare— Onions and garlic will both be there-And sovo and saffron and savory-goo And stuff that I bought from an old Hindu. Ginger with syrup in quaint stone jars. Almonds and dates in tinselled bars. Astrakhan caviar—highly prized— Citron and orange peel crystallized. Anchovy paste and poha jam, Basil and chili and marioram. Pickles and cheeses from every land. Flavors they use in Samarkand. I'll have a cook that I'll name Oh Iov. A sleek, fat, vellow-faced China boy Who can roast a pig or mix a drink. (You can't improve on a slant-eved Chink).

There'll be driftwood powder to burn on logs

And a shaggy rug for a couple of dogs,
Boreas, winner of prize and cup,
And Micky, a lovable gutter-pup,
Thoroughbreds, both of them, right from the start,
One by breeding, the other by heart.

Pewter and bronze and hammered brass, Old carved wood and gleaming glass, Candles in polychrome candlesticks And peasant lamps with floating wicks, Dragons in silk on a Mandarin suit In a chest that is filled with vagabond-loot. All of the beautiful useless things That a vagabond's aimless drifting brings.

Then when my house is all complete I'll stretch me out on the window-seat With a favorite book and a cigarette And a long cool drink that Oh Joy will get. I'll look about at my bachelor's nest While the sun goes zooming down the West And the hot gold light will strike on my face And make me think of some heathen place That I've failed to see, that I've missed some way—

A place that I'd planned to find some day. . .

I'll feel the lure of it drawing me . . .
Oh damn! I know what the end will be,
I'll go. And my house will fall away
While the mice by night and the moths by
day

Will nibble the covers off all my books
And the spiders weave in the shadowed nooks.

And my dogs—I'll see that they have a home

While I follow the sun, while I drift and roam

To the ends of the earth like a chip on the stream,

Like a straw on the wind, like a vagrant dream,

And the thought will strike with a sharp, sharp pain

That I never can build my house again— This house that I'll have for a single day. Well...it's just a dream house anyway.



ALOHA OE

Some day in some cold city of the north I'll hear the tattered fragment of a song—
"Aloha Oe." The dull gray city streets will fade.

I'll see the lavish gold of summer's suns Drenching a land of joyous, fadeless green; I'll see the luminous Hawaiian moons Making white magic with the sea and sky; I'll sense the fragrance of white ginger; I'll see that single burning star That leaves a silver path across the sea At Waikiki

In some cold city of the north I'll hear that song

And one—not more than one—pale moon will wane;

Then I'll be back. And I will say—
"Aloha oe." That means "Farewell"
And, too, "Hawaii, I greet you."



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DON BLANDING.



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